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Chairman:	Mr. GUERRERO (Vice Chairman)	(Philippines)
later:	Mr. BALZAN (Rapporteur)	(Malta)
later:	Mr. GUERRERO (Vice-Chairman)	(Philippines)

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In the absence of Mr. Piriz-Ballon (Uruguay), Mr. Guerrero (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (A/47/3, A/47/82-S/23512, A/47/83, A/47/132, A/47/212-E/1992/54, A/47/222-E/1992/57 and Corr.1, A/47/225-S/23998, A/47/267, A/47/278-E/1992/77, A/47/283-E/1992/83, A/47/289-E/1992/68, A/47/294-E/1992/84, A/47/338, A/47/375-S/24429, A/47/403, A/47/407, A/47/408, A/47/411, A/47/445, A/47/446, A/47/499, A/47/627; A/C.2/47/L.2, A/C.2/47/L.5)

1. Mr. JI CHAOZHU (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development) introduced the report of the Economic and Social Council for 1992 (A/47/3), published at a time of heightened expectations regarding the role played by the United Nations in the field of international economic cooperation and development. The first high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, held in July 1992 on the theme "Enhancing international cooperation for development: the role of the United Nations system", had been widely regarded as a success, and constituted a positive step forward in the functioning of the Council. Care would have to be taken, however, to ensure equitable geographical representation at the senior official level in order to continue to attract high-level participation and obtain significant results. It might be advisable to limit the debate to a single theme and to encourage spontaneous discussion, with formal statements being held to a minimum. The one-day policy dialogue with the executive heads of the multilateral financial and trade organizations was a formula that should be retained. The executive heads of the World Bank, IMF, GATT and UNCTAD should automatically be associated with the Council's deliberations and with policy formulation. During the coordination segment, a constructive dialogue had been generated between Member States and representatives of the specialized agencies and financial institutions on the eradication of poverty and the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS (reports of the Secretary-General in documents E/1992/47 and E/1992/67), thus reinforcing the need for that type of exchange of views. The members of the Council's Bureau regretted, however, that the debate had ended with a concluding statement by the President rather than with the adoption of a formal decision which would have engaged the entire membership of the Council and would have been transmitted to the General Assembly, and subsequently to the organizations of the United Nations system, for follow-up action. The coordination segment should be carefully prepared. The themes should be chosen sufficiently far in advance to leave time for gathering data, carrying out system-wide consultations and preparing comprehensive reports.

2. At its substantive session in July 1992, the Economic and Social Council had adopted 60 resolutions, including resolution 1992/27, co-sponsored by a record number of delegations, concerning the convening of a world summit for social development, one of the issues taken up at the high-level segment of the Council. The World Summit for Social Development, which the Government of Denmark had offered to host in Copenhagen, was designed to put people and

(Mr. Ji Chaozhu)

social issues at the centre of development cooperation and to provide a common framework for United Nations action in that area. Three core themes seemed to be emerging: the reduction of poverty, the promotion of productive employment, and social cohesion. The Council had also adopted a resolution on activities of transnational corporations in South Africa (resolution 1992/34), calling for a cautiously optimistic approach to the evolving situation in that country. On the subject of the International Conference on Population and Development (resolution 1992/37) it should be noted that preparatory work was well under way. Lastly, the Council had endorsed the updated global strategy of the World Health Organization for the prevention and control of AIDS (resolution 1992/33).

3. In the context of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, it was to be hoped that the ideas and suggestions put forward by the Secretary-General in his report on the item (A/47/534) would be useful to the General Assembly in its consideration of agenda item 47. It was also to be hoped that, given the dire situation of the world economy, Member States would succeed in demonstrating political will and adopting a collective approach to stimulating world economic growth. The prospect had been clouded by the delay in concluding the Uruguay Round. The intervention of political leaders at the highest level would be needed to reconcile the positions of the European Community and the United States of America.

4. Mrs. SADIK (Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development) said that the Second Committee's programme of work covered many of the most pressing, freqently interrelated challenges, facing humanity. Although some countries had succeeded in enhancing the quality of life of their citizens, 1.2 billion people continued to live in absolute poverty. Rapid population growth was straining available resources - food, fresh water, health services and educational opportunities - accelerating pollution, the generation of waste and rapid urbanization, and propelling uncontrolled migration. It was encouraging, however, that, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the international community had demonstrated its determination to act. Just as the Rio Conference had sought to integrate environmental concerns and economic activities, the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo in 1994, would be an occasion for studying the links between population and sustainable development. The Conference had been given a mandate to adopt a set of recommendations to guide the technical and operational aspects of population policies and programmes, and to provide input for the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

5. Four of the six expert groups convened as part of the preparations for the Conference had already met (E/1992/60), and the remaining two should meet shortly. Their reports and recommendations were being published as they became available. In addition, five regional conferences on population, jointly organized by the regional economic commissions and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), had taken place or were about to do so (E/1992/60).

(Mrs. Sadik)

They would provide an opportunity for political dialogue and for articulating regional perspectives. Lastly, several ad hoc consultations were envisaged, in cooperation with Governments, foundations and non-governmental organizations. The consultations might cover the following questions: population and development planning, women's perspectives on family planning, reproductive health and reproductive rights, moral issues in the population and development debate, lessons to be drawn from the Rio Conference, and the demographic impact of HIV/AIDS. In addition, UNFPA had organized a consultative meeting on the relationships between economic growth and population.

6. Governments, for their part, had been invited to set up national committees representing all organizations and entities concerned and responsible for coordinating the preparation of national reports on population reviewing the demographic and development situation in each ocuntry; a comprehensive analysis of those reports would be submitted to the Conference on Population. The response from countries had been extremely encouraging. It should be noted that the Conference was arousing increasing interest throughout the world. The non-aligned countries, at their Tenth Conference of Heads of State or Government, the Group of 77, at its sixteenth annual meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, and the Group of Fifteen had expressed their support for and interest in the questions to be addressed. The Government of Egypt, which had offered to host the Conference, was working in close cooperation with the Conference secretariat. Two further meetings of the Preparatory Committee were scheduled, and it would be helpful if delegations would give their views on the dates of the two meetings. The success of preparations for the Cairo Conference depended heavily on active intergovernmental consultations and political negotiations. It was important that parliamentarians, women's groups, intergovernmental organizations and the private sector should be involved as widely as possible in the expert group meetings and regional conferences. Non-governmental organizations from developing countries should take part in the preparatory process, with the help, inter alia, of financial support that might be provided by bilateral donors and foundations. There was also a need to ensure gender balance on the national committees and delegations. Several countries had made or pledged contributions to the special trust funds for the Conference. It was hoped that other countries, both developed and developing, would come forth with contributions for the Conference and its preparatory process.

7. Mr. JOSEPH (World Health Organization) introduced the report by the Director-General of WHO on the implementation of the global strategy for the prevention and control of AIDS (A/47/289), prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 46/203. The report was based on the report submitted by the Director-General of WHO to the Forty-fifth World Health Assembly and on the statements of activities submitted by the organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, members of the Inter-Agency Advisory Group on AIDS.

(Mr. Joseph, WHO)

8. As at 15 April 1992, WHO estimated that 6 to 7 million men and 4 to 5 million women in the world had been infected with HIV. By the year 2000, a total of 30 to 40 million men, women and children would have been infected with HIV since the start of the pandemic.

9. The global strategy for the prevention and control of AIDS, updated to take into account the changing nature of the pandemic and the knowledge gained in the previous five years, had been endorsed by the Forty-fifth World Health Assembly in May 1992 and by the Economic and Social Council in July 1992. Endorsement of the updated global strategy by the General Assembly would be welcome. One of the main objectives had been to mobilize and unify national and international efforts against AIDS. It was increasingly important to coordinate preventive action, and a report on that subject had been submitted to the Economic and Social Council in July 1992 during the coordination segment (E/1992/67).

10. For the fifth consecutive year, World AIDS Day would be observed around the world on 1 December. The theme of the Day for the current year, "AIDS: a community commitment", highlighted the need for local communities and the world community to join forces in the fight against AIDS. Political commitment was vital in the fight against complacency towards the problem of AIDS, and it should be noted in that connection that the Government of Nigeria, in collaboration with WHO, had succeeded in placing AIDS on the agenda of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity which had taken place in Senegal in June 1992, and at which a declaration and a programme of action for the OAU countries had been adopted. It was important for all Governments to encourage such consciousness-raising efforts, but the fight against AIDS could only be won through an accurate assessment of local circumstances and dialogue with those directly concerned.

11. Mr. KHALIQ-UZ-ZAMAN (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that with the increasing globalization of issues and the growing interdependence of nations, the United Nations had a central role to play in international economic relations. The goals could best be achieved by strengthening the role of the General Assembly and further revitalizing the Economic and Social Council.

12. In resolution 45/264, the General Assembly had decided to revitalize the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, in particular by strengthening the Economic and Social Council. In 1992, the Council's substantive session had taken place in the revised format for the first time, in accordance with resolution 45/264. The high-level segment on the theme "Enhancing international economic cooperation for development: the role of the United Nations system" had generated lively debate and demonstrated the central role which the United Nations could play in global macroeconomic policy formulation. The active participation of the heads of specialized agencies and multilateral financial and trade institutions had also been an important element in the debate. Another highly positive development had been the decision to set up an ad hoc working group of the Council for the purpose

(Mr. Khaliq-Uz-Zaman, Pakistan)

of holding consultations on enhancing the role of the United Nations system in the promotion of international cooperation for development.

13. However, the Group of 77 believed that there was a further need to revitalize the United Nations in the economic and social fields and, especially, to strengthen the role of the Council by adopting the following measures, already proposed by the Group. Firstly, the high-level segment should consider, on a regular basis, the question of macroeconomic coordination at the global level. The executive heads of the competent organizations, institutions and agencies should take part in the debate and submit periodic reports on the implementation of the decisions taken on the subject. Furthermore, during the coordination segment, the heads of the institutions and agencies concerned should submit reports on the implementation of recommendations made during previous Council meetings. The Committee segment of the Economic and Social Council could be abolished, but the Council should continue to hold plenary meetings to supervise the activities of the subsidiary organs. The membership of the Council need not be considered for the time being. That also applied to proposals concerning subsidiary mechanisms, emergency sessions and so on.

14. The Group of 77 had also suggested that the operational activities segment should be aimed specifically at providing overall policy guidance for all United Nations operational activities until the following triennial policy review, following up General Assembly recommendations and decisions regarding operational activities, coordinating operational activities for development on a system-wide basis, monitoring the division of labour among the funds and programmes, and evaluating the reports on the work of the funds and programmes, including their overall impact. The Group of 77 was carefully examining the recommendations submitted by other groups and countries, and would endeavour to contribute to the success of the important negotiations currently being pursued within the framework of the ad hoc group recently constituted by the President of the General Assembly.

15. The Group of 77 had taken note of the report of the Secretary-General on the impact of the evolution of East-West relations on global growth and development (A/47/403), which confirmed some of the fears expressed by the developing countries. It was now likely that the East would need international assistance over a longer period of time and on a much larger scale than originally anticipated, which could harm the interests of developing countries. It was the firm view of the Group of 77 that assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States and the countries of Eastern Europe should be provided from additional resources, without in any way eroding the international community's commitment to assist the development process in the developing countries. For that reason, as the Secretary-General had pointed out, it was important to restore the multilateral trading system and improve it continuously, inter alia by bringing the Uruguay Round to a successful conclusion at the earliest opportunity.

(Mr. Khaliq-Uz-Zaman, Pakistan)

16. The Group of 77 appreciated the Egyptian Government's offer to host the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, to which it attached great importance. It was essential that the preparatory process should focus on the linkage between development and population, that the entire intergovernmental machinery should become involved in that process and that the two sessions of the Preparatory Committee should be structured in a manner that would ensure a rational organization of work.

17. Mr. CLARK (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said that the new structure of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, agreed in General Assembly resolution 45/264 and employed for the first time in 1992, represented a significant improvement. The discussion on enhancing international cooperation for development was of a much higher quality than most Council debates in recent years. He hoped that participation would be at a similarly high level in future years and that the segment would attract increasing numbers of ministers from both developed and developing countries. The decision to set up an ad hoc working group to follow up the high-level segment was also encouraging. It was important to ensure that topics of high priority to Member States were chosen for discussion in future years.

18. The coordination segment had also been marked by genuine dialogue. The exchange of views on the coordination of United Nations efforts to combat poverty and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) served to highlight the diversity of measures being taken and to underline the necessity of not wasting resources on duplicative programmes. Statements by representatives of United Nations organizations should be circulated in advance and should specifically address issues of coordination. In addition, adequate time should be provided for a free exchange of views. Finally, the debate should result in conclusions agreed by Member States, rather than a statement by the President; on that basis, the various governing bodies could make appropriate adjustments to their work programmes and medium-term plans.

19. The operational activities segment had included some useful dialogue with the agencies, but had had little practical impact. The Council should be able to provide overall policy guidance to United Nations agencies and funds with a view to enhancing the governance and thrust of the Organization's development activities.

20. The 1991 reform did not address the question of the Council's agenda. Currently, the agenda of the Economic Committee, for example, largely duplicated that of the Second Committee of the General Assembly. The issues dealt with by the Council's Economic Committee should therefore be considered in the coordination and operational activities segments. Similarly, the work of the Social Committee should be transformed into a social segment of sufficient length to ensure proper discussion of all the items currently dealt with by that Committee. The Council would thus be organized on the basis of working segments, with a high-level meeting to discuss policy issues and

(Mr. Clark, United Kingdom)

provide guidance to the United Nations system. Major economic and social policy themes would continue to be discussed in the high-level segment.

21. Most documentation arrived too late to provide adequate time for preparation. While Member States should avoid requesting duplicative reports, the Secretariat should take the steps required to produce documents on time. In particular, short reports of high quality would reduce the burden on translation services and on delegations.

22. Having already set out its views on the substantive issues considered by the Council at its session, the European Community and its member States would refrain from repeating them and would merely reiterate the importance they attached to the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held at Cairo in 1994.

23. Mr. SHREIM (Observer for Palestine), commenting on the reports of the Secretary-General on the economic and social consequences of the establishment of settlements by Israel in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Syrian Golan (A/47/294-E/1992/84) and on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/47/212-E/1992/54), stated that any real development of Palestinian territory was impossible, as the occupation authorities were confiscating and annexing land with the aim of destroying the Palestinian economic infrastructure, expelling Palestinians and replacing them with Jewish immigrants.

24. Given that the General Assembly had recognized in the Declaration on the right to development (resolution 41/128, annex) that the right was an inalienable human right which also implied the full realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, the right of Palestinians to development should be addressed within the wider context of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, as defined in various resolutions. The United Nations had also emphasized the principle of the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people over its national resources. The Palestinians were convinced that the United Nations could play a larger role in providing economic protection to their people.

25. The Palestinian economy continued to suffer as a result of Israeli practices, particularly since the beginning of the intifadah in 1987 and in the aftermath of the Gulf War. As the Secretary-General's report showed, one of the most dangerous practices was the ongoing construction and enlargement of Israeli settlements.

26. Security Council resolution 465 (1980) stressed that the policy of establishing Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, had no legal validity and constituted a major obstacle to the realization of a just peace in the region. Many other General Assembly and Security Council resolutions reaffirmed that position. In addition, the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which was applicable to all occupied territories, including Jerusalem, prohibited the occupying Power from

(Mr. Shreim, Observer, Palestine)

establishing settlements (art. 49, sixth para.). Security Council resolutions remained binding and should be implemented, but according to statistics from the United States Department of State, there were some 250 settlements, comprising 254,000 inhabitants, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem.

27. That illegal policy aimed to deprive the Palestinian people of their national resources. For example, water resources were subjected to excessive exploitation by Israel. According to a UNDP study, 80 per cent of the water resources in the occupied Palestinian territory were being used to supply Israeli needs, and represented 30 per cent of Israeli water consumption.

28. Israel's land confiscation policy had also escalated in the past few years. More than 65 per cent of the land in the West Bank and over 45 per cent of the land in the Gaza Strip had been confiscated. In addition, a great number of trees, mostly fruit-bearing, had been uprooted (128,364 trees between the beginning of the intifadah and June 1992).

29. Despite several limited gestures in the wake of the election, the Israeli authorities had failed to take the steps necessary to bring about real change in the living conditions of Palestinians. In addition, while having announced a freeze on what they called political settlements, they continued to establish settlements, mainly in the Jordan valley and a vast area around East Jerusalem, amounting to more than 50 per cent of the land mass of the West Bank.

30. With reference to the Secretary-General's report on assistance to the Palestinian people, Palestine thanked all countries, United Nations bodies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that had contributed to efforts to assist the Palestinian people. However, in view of the increasing difficulties the Palestinian people faced because of Israeli policies, the amount of assistance they received should be immediately increased. It would be useful if the Secretary-General's report on the subject the following year included some evaluation of current projects and the obstacles encountered, as well as any recommendations.

31. Palestine differentiated between two kinds of assistance: humanitarian and development assistance. In its view, humanitarian aid should be provided by the occupying Power, Israel, and should essentially be channelled through UNRWA, and to a lesser extent, through UNICEF and UNFPA. Much more attention should be given to development assistance. Further, the Palestinian economy needed grants and loans, which should be targeted to stimulate local resources and not to replace them. It would also be desirable for the United Nations to play a bigger role in the future in coordinating assistance to the Palestinian people, in close cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

32. A whole year had elapsed since the start of the Madrid peace process. Although the Palestinians firmly believed that the multilateral talks were promising for all parties, on all levels, they also believed that the

(Mr. Shreim, Observer, Palestine)

negotiations could not progress while the bilateral talks continued to falter, and if there was to be progress in the bilateral talks, Israel must agree to comply with international legality.

33. At its most recent session, the Economic and Social Council had adopted by an overwhelming majority two resolutions concerning the question of Palestine - the first on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli settlements on the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, and on the Arab population of the Syrian Golan, and the second on assistance to the Palestinian people. By voting in favour of those resolutions in the Second Committee, the international community would be both sending a clear message regarding Israeli settlement policies and reaffirming its commitment to supporting the Palestinian people by all possible means. But, given the opposition of some countries, it now appeared that the resolutions would not be unanimously adopted. Palestine appealed to all Member States to adopt them by the largest possible majority.

34. Mrs. HASSAN (Egypt) said that the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in July 1992 had been characterized by important initiatives, which Egypt hoped would be pursued at future sessions. First of all, steps had been taken to make the Council's deliberations more productive and less formal. During the high-level segment of the Council, a broad convergence of views had emerged on the pivotal role that the United Nations system should play at the present juncture, which provided a unique opportunity for strengthening international development cooperation. A solid consensus had been established on the inextricable linkages between international development cooperation for the eradication of poverty and the maintenance of peace and security, and on the idea that the development of developing countries should be pursued with the same vigour as the maintenance of peace and security. A thought-provoking dialogue had taken place on a vision of development as human-centred and the need to integrate social goals, in particular the advancement of women and the protection of vulnerable groups. That dialogue had also stressed the importance of interaction between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions.

35. The Council having accepted Egypt's offer, in September 1994 the Egyptian Government would host the International Conference on Population and Development, the first on that subject to be held in Africa, which had the world's highest population growth rate. Geographically and politically, Egypt was a crossroads, and had long been aware of the seriousness of population issues and the need to tackle them at social and economic levels. Egypt had recently made remarkable progress in that respect: the population growth rate had started to come down owing to a policy which had a twin thrust: transformation of the population into a productive force through education and training, and control of population increase through family planning. The theme of the Conference on Population and Development would be the linkages between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development, linkages which had already been spelled out at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; the Conference on Population and Development

(Mrs. Hassan, Egypt)

would have to build on the results obtained at the Conference on Environment and Development. In preparation for the 1994 Conference regional meetings were planned, which were being organized by the regional economic commissions and UNFPA, to which her delegation paid tribute. Such regional conferences would introduce regional perspectives; five of the six expert group meetings mandated by the Economic and Social Council (decision 1991/93) would take place before the end of 1992. In view of the magnitude of the decisions to be made, the duration and timing of the second and third sessions of the Preparatory Committee needed to be adjusted. The success of the Conference would depend not only on the quality of the preparatory work, but also on an increased level of public awareness of population issues and their links with development. Her delegation thanked the countries which had contributed to the Trust Fund for the Conference.

36. Egypt believed that technical cooperation among developing countries should be applied in all stages of the project cycle and facilitated by all organizations in the United Nations system.

37. At the initiative of Norway, Egypt and Italy, a ministerial workshop on energy had been held at Solstrand (Norway) in July 1992. The meeting had focused on the crucial links between energy, environment and development. The joint memorandum issued at the end of the workshop appeared in document A/47/390.

38. Her delegation shared the concern expressed earlier on the continuing rise in the number of rural women in poverty and considered that the international community had a responsibility for improving the condition of rural women. Her delegation supported the Geneva Declaration issued by the summit on the economic advancement of rural women.

39. The renewal of meetings of ESCWA, the sixteenth session of which had been held in Amman in September 1992, was a cause for satisfaction.

40. With regard to the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council, she said that the General Assembly had made significant progress towards reforming the United Nations in the economic and social fields, but any reform should aim at making the United Nations more effective in promoting international cooperation for the development of the developing countries. Her delegation supported the position of the Group of 77 on that question.

41. Mr. Balzan (Malta), Rapporteur, took the Chair.

42. Mr. AMMARIN (Jordan) said that although international law explicitly prohibited an occupying Power from settling its population in territories it occupied, the Israeli Government had continued to settle Israeli colonists on Arab lands on the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan. He drew attention to Security Council resolutions 446 (1979) and 465 (1980) on that subject. The continuous increase in the construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was having a tremendous effect on the

(Mr. Ammarin, Jordan)

socio-economic structure of the Palestinian people; the situation was very alarming. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/294), which dealt, among other things, with the problem of water resources in the occupied territories, agricultural production had been affected and the income of the Palestinians had dropped steadily. While the Israeli settlers could export and import freely, Palestinians had to go through Israeli middlemen. To make room for more settlements, Israel was confiscating land and water resources belonging to the Palestinians. Yet agriculture continued to be the backbone of their economy. Moreover, the Israeli settlers constituted an armed militia often committing acts of violence against unarmed Palestinian civilians. The condition of the Palestinians in the occupied territories could not remain as it was if a just and lasting peace in the Middle East was really being sought. As the Palestinian population was increasing by about 3 per cent a year, settling Israeli immigrants in the West Bank and Gaza, which were already heavily populated, would cause severe strain on land and water resources and would doom future generations of Palestinian Arabs to poverty while threatening the land with tragic environmental damage. Although the cold-war era had ended, the question of how long Israel could continue its occupation and its practices remained.

43. Mr. Guerrero (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, resumed the Chair.

44. Mr. LAOUARI (Algeria), referring to the question of aid to the Palestinian people, said that, in spite of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Israeli occupying authorities were continuing their total dispossession of the Palestinian and Arab population of the occupied territories in defiance of international conventions. Employing a judicial and administrative arsenal which was unjust and discriminatory with respect to the Palestinians and Arabs, they had undertaken the large-scale colonization of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Syrian Golan and East Jerusalem. Launched in 1967, that movement had been intensified with the massive immigration to Israel of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe. Those deliberate practices amounted to a denial of justice which had disastrous economic and social consequences for the Palestinian and Arab population. Large amounts of Arab land were confiscated regularly and, with the help of subsidies and other benefits, the settler colonies were growing and increasing in number while the Arab and Palestinian towns and villages were subjected to military restrictions and condemned to isolation. Moreover, the restrictions relating to water resources and the uprooting of fruit trees led to a decline in agricultural production and income and a steep rise in unemployment. Many of the local inhabitants were thus gradually forced to abandon their homes.

45. In spite of the traditional political divisions, it had recently been possible to begin a dynamic for peace which made possible the hope of a general, just and lasting settlement of the conflict which would take into account the inalienable rights of the Palestinian and Arab people of the occupied territories. The international community and the States with recognized influence must now do everything in their power to induce the Israeli authorities to comply scrupulously with the resolutions of the

(Mr. Laouari, Algeria)

Security Council and the General Assembly and put a definitive end to a policy and practices which were unanimously condemned. The international community should redouble its efforts to increase its aid and intensify the programme of economic and social assistance. He reaffirmed Algeria's solidarity with the Palestinian and Arab populations of the occupied territories in their struggle against injustice and oppression and to exercise their inalienable rights.

46. Referring to the international conference on population and development, he said that in many regions of the world large parts of the population continued to live in extremely precarious conditions and the continuing deterioration of the economic situation in many countries, combined with the rapid growth of their population, threatened to aggravate still further an already critical situation. The various plans of action and strategies adopted had highlighted the link between the questions of population, development and environment and the need for an integrated approach. The international community and the developed countries should undertake energetic global action without delay to sustain the development of the developing economies, and the 1994 Conference on Population and Development would no doubt facilitate such action. The Conference should be prepared as carefully as possible. In that context, the meetings of experts and the activities conducted on the regional and national levels took on special importance. The developing countries should be given appropriate technical and financial assistance to prepare for the Conference. His delegation welcomed the extrabudgetary contributions made by some Governments and hoped that that example would be followed quickly by others. It congratulated UNFPA and the Secretary-General of the Conference.

47. The efforts of the Central and Eastern European countries to integrate themselves into the world economy had given rise to a sense of solidarity rarely equalled in the annals of contemporary international relations, while North-South cooperation reflected the deadlock in which his country currently found itself. At the same time, the reforms undertaken by many developing countries, particularly in Africa, were being hindered by the combined effects of an unfavourable economic climate, drying up of foreign sources of financing and the net transfer of financial resources from developing to the developed countries. If not remedied soon, that situation could give rise to a new form of North-South confrontation, bringing with it serious dangers. It was essential to ensure that, at the very least, the movement of capital into the Central and Eastern European countries did not place the developing countries at a disadvantage.

48. Mr. FRIIS (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the report of the Economic and Social Council had been circulated so late that delegations had barely had time to study it.

49. The Secretary-General's report on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social and related fields (A/47/534) contained many valuable observations and proposals and provided a good starting-point for further discussions on reform of the Economic and Social

(Mr. Friis, Denmark)

Council. In 1992, the Council had for the first time held a single substantive session and the high-level debate had proved worthwhile. However, in order to ensure continuation of that constructive debate, it might be useful in the future to focus on a single theme. Formal statements should also be limited to leave more time for genuine dialogue.

50. The debate on coordination issues had demonstrated that donor and recipient countries alike agreed that the United Nations system should use its limited resources responsibly, avoid duplication and strengthen inter-agency cooperation.

51. While there had been progress in the revitalization and restructuring of the Economic and Social Council, much remained to be done. Repetitive and often futile debates in subsidiary bodies of the Council, the Council itself and the General Assembly highlighted the need for better allocation of agenda items, in particular between the Council and the Second and Third Committees. The General Assembly needed to coordinate the work of the Second and Third Committees and, similarly, the Economic and Social Council should take an integrated approach to economic and social questions, which would best be considered in the context of the coordination segment. It was also important to improve the governing mechanisms in the economic and social fields. The special ad hoc working group set up for that purpose by the General Assembly was considering, among other items, the questions of an international development council and smaller executive bodies for funds and programmes.

52. It was encouraging that reforms had also been undertaken in other United Nations forums such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which had embarked on a process of revitalization at its eighth session, held in Cartagena. Measures were currently being taken to give concrete form to the consensus which had emerged on the need to reform the Conference's structure and working methods, and it was important for all members to make the necessary efforts to complete the revitalization process. Steps had already been taken to integrate the concept of sustainable development into the work of UNCTAD. The Nordic countries were confident that dialogue and in-depth analysis would benefit both the international environment and the trade and development of the developing countries.

53. The industrialized countries must make every effort to provide the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, with greater access to international markets. That included removing tariff and non-tariff barriers and improving the generalized system of preferences. In that connection, it was regrettable that the Uruguay Round negotiations had not been completed.

54. The AIDS pandemic was far from under control, and higher priority must be given to prevention of the disease; the Nordic countries appreciated the United Nations system's efforts in that area. In view of the gravity and socio-economic consequences of the pandemic, a decisive multisectoral effort was in order, with each party concentrating on the area in which it was most

(Mr. Friis, Denmark)

competent. The Nordic countries fully supported Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/33 on that issue and looked forward to the report which the Director-General of WHO would submit to the Council in 1993.

55. The World Food Council was as relevant today as when it had been set up in 1974, even though it had not been able to meet the expectations of its founders. There was, however, an increasing need for an international forum for discussion of global food policy issues. Such issues should be included among the key development issues coordinated by the Economic and Social Council and should also be addressed by an agency responsible for norm-setting activities, data dissemination and operational activities in the field.

56. Understanding of population issues had increased greatly during the past decade. Most Governments had realized the importance of making an active population policy part of their national development plans. The task was no longer to convince Governments but to assist them. A greater awareness of population issues must be created in industrialized countries as well as in developing countries. Population activities should be made an integral part of assistance in a wide range of areas - advancement of the status of women, education, primary health care and literacy promotion.

57. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had underscored the connections between population, environment and development. The Nordic countries believed that even more attention should be paid to those relationships. It therefore welcomed the decision to hold an International Conference on Population and Development in 1994. The very title of the conference emphasized that population policies were important and, in some countries, crucial to balanced and sustainable development.

58. Mr. PASZYNSKI (Poland), commenting on the Secretary-General's report on the impact of the evolution of East-West relations on global growth and development (A/47/403), said that, regrettably, the report, the first on that topic, dealt with only one aspect of the transition process in Central and Eastern Europe, highlighting the potentially negative elements and overlooking the dynamic effects of that transformation. In addition, some of the predictions did not seem to be very well documented.

59. The risks of a diversion of resource flows to Central and Eastern European countries were dwelt on at great length, while in his report on net transfer of resources between developing and developed countries (A/47/404), the Secretary-General stressed that in 1990-1991 the net transfer of financial resources to the developing countries had been positive for the first time in many years. In any case, the growth of resource inflows to those countries could not keep pace with the increase of transfers of resources from the western to the eastern part of Germany, or with the drain on world savings resulting from the budget deficits of certain protagonists on the world economic stage. It also seemed false to assert that the increase in demand for capital in Central and Eastern Europe exerted upward pressure on world interest rates, for those interest rates were determined primarily by internal

(Mr. Paszynski, Poland)

conditions, by the decline in savings rates, by the domestic policy considerations of the major economic Powers, or by imbalances in the world economy.

60. The negative impact of the contraction in demand for imported products, especially from developing countries, in Eastern and Central European countries, also appeared to be exaggerated. Table 3 clearly showed that the countries that had progressed furthest in transforming their economies - Hungary, Czechoslovakia and especially Poland - had expanded their imports from the majority of developing countries in 1990-1991, reflecting both the liberalization of trade and the growth in demand for consumer goods. That table also showed that the more outward-oriented and market-based developing countries were better placed to avail themselves of the opportunities created by the transition in Eastern and Central European countries. Emphasis was now placed on the downward trend in trade with those few developing countries that had been full members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) or that had had cooperant status, whereas in the past the socialist countries had been criticized for restricting their trade with developing countries to precisely those countries.

61. The phenomenon of transition, which was of crucial significance to the international community, must not be considered from the narrow perspective of East-West trade and its impact on the world economy. Above all, that transition "had resulted in a one-world economy" (A/47/397, para. 91). Furthermore, the concepts of East and West now seemed outdated and without relevance to the contemporary world. In the modern-day interdependent world, the advantage of one group of countries in international economic relations should not be regarded as necessarily prejudicial to the interests of other groups of countries. Such reasoning was absolutely unjustified, given the close interlinkage between world economic processes. It would seem that subjecting the countries in transition to stricter economic discipline under stabilization and adjustment programmes would be beneficial to the world economy as a whole. Moreover, lending on a net basis to the economies in transition by the International Monetary Fund had turned positive for the first time since 1985 (A/47/270, para. 64).

62. Furthermore, transition brought many intangible benefits. In creating a one-world economy, it had discredited the alternative to market-based development. The collapse of the fallacious economic theories of communism had undoubtedly helped shift economic thinking in developing countries, underscoring the world-wide relevance of the transition process. At the same time, it had contributed to eliminating the split between the two elements of international economic cooperation, which had been governed by entirely dissimilar sets of rules.

63. The gradual integration of the economies in transition into the world economy was beneficial to all. It allowed for more efficient resource allocation at world scale and for a better international division of labour. As was noted by the Secretary-General in his report (A/47/397, para. 77), the

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opening up of the countries in transition would entail a remaking of the regional organizations, notably on the European continent, partly because of the disappearance of CMEA. That being the case, one was bound to wonder whether it was not an oversimplification to say that that integration amounted to discrimination against other countries.

64. The transformations taking place in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe were a matter of the utmost importance to the community of nations. The United Nations should not disregard that development, but should analyse the process of transition in its dynamic context.

AGENDA ITEM 87: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE (continued)

(b) SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (continued)

65. Mr. ALIOU (Cameroon), introducing draft decision A/C.2/47/L.19 on behalf of the sponsors, said that at the previous session, in its resolution 46/171, the General Assembly had invited all States and competent United Nations organizations and programmes which had participated actively in the conference of friends of Chad to participate in the different round tables to be held in N'Djamena in 1992. However, because of technical difficulties, only the round table on promotion of the private sector would take place in 1992. Consequently, in the draft decision, States and competent United Nations organizations and programmes were invited to participate actively in the round tables to be held in 1993.

66. Honduras, Singapore and Suriname had joined the sponsors of the draft decision.

67. Mr. BEYARY (Saudi Arabia), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.20 on behalf of the sponsors, commented on its various provisions and announced that China, the United Arab Emirates and Senegal had become sponsors.

68. Mr. WANG Xinggen (China) said that China wished to become a sponsor of draft decision A/C.2/47/L.19.

69. Mr. MOHAMED (Sudan) said that the Sudan wished to become a sponsor of draft decision A/C.2/47/L.19.

AGENDA ITEM 88: INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE ECONOMIC REHABILITATION OF ANGOLA (continued)

70. Mr. da COSTA PEREIRA (Portugal) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.17, entitled "International assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola", on behalf of the sponsors. He said that the text needed to be improved, and that he thus looked forward to the informal consultations on that issue.

(Mr. da Costa Pereira, Portugal)

71. Portugal was deeply concerned at the situation in Angola and was dismayed by the recent violence, which threatened the peace process and the implementation of the Peace Accords. It would continue its efforts to persuade all the parties to exercise restraint and to engage in a constructive dialogue without delay. Peace and stability were essential for the economic rehabilitation of Angola, and the difficult economic and social situation in that country required the urgent attention of the international community. Given the seriousness of the situation, Member States and the international organizations must commit themselves to rendering all possible assistance to the Angolan people.

72. Burkina Faso, Honduras, Madagascar, Niger and Nigeria had become sponsors of the draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.